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"Run as fast as the rest of us."
"And Mr. Kenton rallied you?"
"He did, ma'am. Abner Jenkins was carrying our company flag, and he tumbled down and left it lying on the ground. I was right behind him with Kenton, and the Yankee lifts it up, waves it about and yells for us to halt and rally."
"And did the officers rally, too?" persisted Marian.

"Waal, yes, but they was purty slow about it. We had got the cannon and were drawing it off afore I saw any of 'em. Reckon they feel mighty cut up over it, fur they allus said the Yankees wouldn't stand fire."

Steve Brayton was not a close observer, or he might have discovered a secret that afternoon. Both mother and daughter exhibited the greatest interest and asked him many questions, and when he took his departure he said to himself: "Durn my hide if they wasn't more interested than half the men!"

Two or three days later Captain Wyle appeared, and Steve Brayton vanished. The captain expected to create a sensation, but was bitterly disappointed. Everybody was friendly, but Brayton had told the story of the rally and put the credit where it belonged. He had plenty of excuses to urge, and his story was quite different from Brayton's, but somehow it failed to go. While he was congratulated on his promotion, which was strong evidence in itself of his good standing with his superior officers, he had not rallied his flying company and led it back, and no one could be quite satisfied with his record. On the second evening of his arrival he called upon the Percys. His sole reason for returning home at that time was to make this call. The victory which he had helped to achieve, his promotion, the laudatory notices he had received in his home newspaper, all these things went to make him believe that he would be accorded a frank welcome by mother and daughter and that opportunity might be given him to plead his cause.

The captain's welcome was cordial enough, and after the first salutations conversation naturally turned to the war. He took an early opportunity to laughingly remark:

"Well, I suppose you have heard all about our Yankee?"

"To whom do you refer, captain?" stifiy inquired Marian.

"Why, to Kenton, of course. I believe you both knew him? I had no idea



that he could be induced to enlist, and I am surprised that he did not desert to his friends before the battle opened."

"Mr. Kenton believed it his duty as a citizen of Virginia to take up arms in her cause," replied the mother.

"And instead of deserting he seems to have led your company to victory," quietly added Marian.

"He was simply in the rear, we faced about and was carried along with the rush," explained the captain. "Nevertheless he is a brave man, and I hope he is in earnest."

"Why shouldn't he be?" asked the girl.

"Blood will tell" is an old saying. I shan't be surprised to wake up some morning and find that he has deserted to the enemy."

"You do Mr. Kenton gross injustice!" exclaimed Marian as her color came and went, and her eyes looked brighter than he had ever seen them before. "I have seen nothing in him to lead me to believe that he would countenance anything dishonorable, and brave men are never recorded as deserters."

If the captain had planned to make her betray her true feelings toward Royal Kenton, he had succeeded. Her looks and demeanor, added to the words she uttered with so much spirit, satisfied him that his own cause, unless something unforeseen should arise, was hopeless. While he was a man of hot temper he had a great self control, and when he left the house neither mother nor daughter suspected his bitterness of feeling.

"It's no use to deceive myself!" he muttered as he walked slowly down the street. "If the Yankee doesn't desert, and if he is not killed in battle or otherwise, he will return to wed her. With him removed my path is clear. It will be my fault if something doesn't happen to him very soon!"

Something did happen—two or three somethings—before the captain's return to camp. Ike Baxter thoroughly understood what Captain Wyle desired, and he was eager for an opportunity to carry out his wishes. One night when both were on guard about the camp he wheeled in his beat, drew up his musket and deliberately fired to kill. Kenton

was hardly 20 feet distant, face turned away and completely at his mercy. The heavy bullet passed between his arm and side and sped across the camp and killed a poor sergeant as he lay sleeping on his bed. The would-be assassin pleaded accident, and it was natural to believe that it was such. Kenton was one of the first to excuse him, and not the slightest suspicion of the soldier's murderous intentions found lodgment in his mind.

Another incident, and one with far more pleasant surroundings, occurred the very next day. A message came to the commanding officer of the guards from Stonewall Jackson to send Private Kenton to his headquarters. The general looked at the young man before him for half a minute before saying:

"You headed the detachment which captured the gun in a hand to hand fight. You did nobly. Who is captain of your company?"

"Captain Wyle, sir."

"Ah, yes. Captain Truesdale was wounded and crippled for life. I see. And you are still a private?"

"Yes, sir."

"H'm! I ought to have remembered you, but I have been busy—very busy. Is your captain with your company?"

"No, sir. He left several days ago on furlough."

"H'm! And haven't you asked for a furlough too?"

"I have not."

"Well, we'll see about it later on. Tomorrow I shall be away. The day after at 10 o'clock in the morning I wish you to report here to me. Stay! I will write an order to that effect, which will be your authority for leaving camp. Show it to your commanding officer."

And when Kenton returned to the guards and related his interview and exhibited the order all congratulated him—all except Ike Baxter. That individual felt himself greatly wronged, and his mutterings took the form of words:

"Drat that durned Yankee, but he's jest gwine to boss this hull army if the captain don't dun hurry back to camp!"

CHAPTER VIII.

As with the Federals at Arlington, so with the Confederates on the fields and meadows to the south. Battles were fought on the eastern coast and on the western rivers—battles which made history were fought in North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri, but the Army of Virginia remained in its camps. Its leaders realized from the beginning that Virginia would be the real battleground of the war, and that the Army of Virginia would be called upon to render heroic defense. Every hour gained was an advantage, every day a gain of men and material and experience.

When Royal Kenton reported to General Jackson as per order, he was asked if he knew the country to the north of the Confederate outposts. He was forced to reply that he was entirely ignorant of it.

"This is a disadvantage, but one you can overcome," said the general. "We are in need of a few more brave men at the front to act as scouts. Would you have any objection to serving in that capacity?"

"I—I should not like to act the part of a spy," stammered Kenton in much confusion.

"Nor would I ask you to. A spy is generally a brave man and often moved solely by patriotism, but few of them are soldiers, and the profession is under a stigma. As a scout you go in your uniform, secure such information as you can in a legitimate way, and if captured you are treated as a prisoner of war. You can take a comrade with you or go alone, as you elect. Do not be afraid to state your objections if you have any."

"I will go and go alone," replied Kenton after a moment's thought.

"Very well, I am glad to hear it. You can now return to your company, and during the day I will send the proper order to your captain. Upon your return report to me direct, and I have no doubt you will bring information of value."

That afternoon Captain Wyle returned to his company, and when he received the order detailing Private Kenton for temporary duty at headquarters and learned its object he was almost tempted to congratulate him. As between captain and private or between man and man, he would have done so with great heartiness, but as a rival lover he could not. When Ike Baxter had related the story of the attempted "removal," as he called it, he expected words of praise, but they were not uttered. On the contrary, his action was severely criticised, and he went away to sulk and growl.

"Understand me," said the captain as Ike betrayed his disappointment by word and look, "I don't want murder or assassination. I hate him because he's a Yankee and because he is an enemy among us. I want to drive him out—force him to desert to his own side. I want the news to go back home that he has deserted and is a traitor to us. Bring that about, and I'll do anything I can to reward you, but don't shoot him down in cold blood. Now that General Jackson has taken him under his wing we must be more careful than ever."

Armed with a pass that would take him through the Confederate lines and pickets, Royal Kenton made his way toward Washington. When he reached the last outpost, the officer in command gave him the lay of the country along

that front, the position of the Federal videttes so far as known, and named many farmers who sympathized with the Confederate cause and would give him shelter. It was about 10 o'clock in the forenoon when Kenton left the last post behind him and disappeared in the woods. He knew in a general way what was required of him. It was, first, to push as near the Federal lines as possible, and then to estimate the strength of camps or marching columns, locate forts and earthworks and seek to discover the strength of positions. Spies go in disguise and often remain in a camp for days. Scouts are saved from the halter when caught only because they are not "an enemy in disguise."

The spy is detested simply because he is generally moved by a financial consideration and is often a person who will work for the side paying him the best.

The neutral ground between the two armies was a strip of territory from three to six miles wide. Reconnoissances were almost of daily occurrence from one side or the other, and cavalry commands patrolled the highways at frequent intervals.

The sentiment of the Virginia farmers was overwhelmingly Confederate, and whenever Kenton identified himself he was given all information at hand.

During the first two days he had several narrow escapes from Federal cavalry patrols, and on the third day he was treated to a double surprise. The farmer with whom he had remained over night had recommended him to one much nearer the Federal outposts to secure additional information. He reached this place about 11 o'clock in the forenoon, and the first face he saw was that of Marian Percy, the next that of



her mother. The meeting appeared to be as pleasant to all as it was unexpected. The Percys had arrived only two days before in hopes to remove the farmer's wife, who was a relative, to their home in the valley. The woman was ill—too ill to stand the journey, and they would wait for a few days in hopes of an improvement. The house had been visited daily by parties from both armies, but thus far no violence had been offered nor had anything been taken from the farm.

For almost the first time since he had known her Royal Kenton was left alone with Marian Percy for an hour. They sat under the apple trees, and he told her the details of the battle of Bull Run as far as he had gathered them, of his interviews with Jackson, the object of his scout, his hopes and fears of the future.

"You enlisted to serve your state," she said when opportunity came. "This is no longer a question of what a state may or may not do. It is no longer Virginia, but a southern confederacy. Do you feel the same obligation?"

"Does the same obligation exist?" he queried in reply.

"Certainly not. I have dared to so assert and have almost been called a traitor for my language. One does not need to be a politician or the daughter of a politician to realize that the success of the newborn confederacy means the downfall of the republic. And yet Virginians cannot return to their homes and lay aside their weapons of war."

"Thus far I have cast my fortunes with Virginia," replied Kenton, "and it is too late to retreat now, even if I so desired. What the end will be no man can predict."

They talked of other things as they sat on the rude bench Farmer Hastings had constructed that he might smoke his pipe in the shade and still look out over the dusty highway which ran past his door. There was no declaration of love by word of mouth, but I think that some conclusion was arrived at just the same, and that both were happy over it in a silent way.

Dinner had just been eaten when one of the colored servants announced the approach of a body of Federal cavalry from the direction of Washington. Kenton counted them while they were yet half a mile away and made the number to be 20. It was a patrol, and it might stop or pass on.

"You see the situation," said Marian as she approached Kenton, who was carefully examining his revolver. "You could not beat them off single handed, and if you are discovered here you will be taken prisoner and the rest of us subjected to annoyance and insult. You must go at once."

"And leave you unprotected?"

"Our people have an idea that the Yankees have horns and hoofs," she laughed, "but I have lived among them for years, as you know. They will not make war on old men and defenseless women. Go! There is no time to lose! They are surely going to stop here!"

Kenton retreated through the orchard to the cover of a stone wall 200 feet in rear of the house. He was scarcely sheltered when the troopers filed into the yard through the gate and surrounded the house. The captain in command dismounted and was about to rap on the wide open front door when Marian appeared.

"Well?" she queried as he looked at her in the greatest surprise for half a minute.

"Ah, excuse me!" he stammered. "I am looking for some one—a man—a

man who is supposed to be a Confederate scout or spy."

"There is only one white man here—the old farmer himself. We have seen no stranger. You are at liberty to search."

"Oh, no, no! The word of a lady is amply sufficient. Perhaps he took the other road. Sergeant, re-form the men in the highway."

CHAPTER IX.

When the troop had disappeared up the dusty highway, Kenton returned to the house to say goodby to his inmates, and half an hour later he had turned his face southward, satisfied that he had secured all information possible for a scout to pick up. The farmer posted him as to where he would likely strike the Confederate outposts and warned him what highways to avoid, but on that very day McClellan was pushing his cavalry forward and seizing new territory. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon as Kenton, who had been traveling in the fields and under cover of the forest, was about to cross a highway he heard the click, click of a carbine, and a voice called to him:

"Halt where you are, or you are a dead man!"

It was a Federal vidette, dismounted and posted among the bushes which fringed the highway. Kenton looked up to find himself covered by a carbine. Both were on the same side of the road. He had approached the vidette in rear, and had he exercised more vigilance would have detected his presence in time to avoid him. The men were not over 30 feet apart when Kenton got the summons to halt.

Many of the Federal troops were still dressed in the gray uniforms supplied by their respective states, while the Confederates had a variety of uniforms, and it was difficult to detect one side from the other. The vidette had done his duty in halting the prowler, but he was not sure what sort of game he had bagged.

"Throw up your hands!" he commanded as he advanced.

Kenton obeyed. He was armed only with a revolver, and as that was hidden from sight he appeared defenseless.

"Now, then, who are you?" asked the Federal as he came to a halt scarce six feet away.

"I might ask you the same question," replied the scout, making a great effort to appear cool and indifferent.

"I know you might, but I guess you won't. Answer my question!"

"I have information to give."

"What is it?"

"Which side are you on?"

"Oh, it makes a difference, does it? Well, I'm a Confederate. What's your return?"

Kenton looked about him in an uneasy manner as if he had fallen into a trap and contemplated making a bolt to escape.

"Say, you look like a reb, but act like a Yank," laughed the man as he lowered his carbine. "I guess you've got news, and I guess you want to go to headquarters."

"Will you kindly tell me which way to go to strike headquarters?"

"I'll do better'n that—I'll go with you to the picket post and see that you are passed along. Have you been scouting?"

"Yes."

"Seen any rebs?"

"Plenty of them."

"Well, come along, and I'll ride down the road with you to the post. We are posted along here in hopes to catch a reb scout who's been sneaking along our front for two or three days. What did you say your name was?"

"Kenton."

"And mine is Fisher. Hear anything about when we are going to move?"

"Not a word, though the army seems to be all ready."

"It is ready, and why McClellan doesn't push down and walk all over the



Confederate army is a puzzle to me. Seems as if he was waiting to let them get a good ready. Everybody is giving him hail Columbia, but I suppose he knows what he's about. What command do you belong to?"

The pair had been slowly walking side by side down to where the cavalryman's horse was hitched to the limb of a tree. The Federal had quite accepted Kenton as belonging to his side and was planning to do him a good turn by guiding him to the reserve. Kenton must avoid that. He had hoped to do it by stratagem, and he had excuses already on his tongue when asked for his command. Answer he must, but as he did not know the exact location of a single Federal regiment his answer would probably betray him. He was hesitating when the trooper repeated:

"What regiment do you belong to, and where is it stationed?"

"I'm independent," replied the scout as he suddenly snatched at the carbine and twisted it out of the other's grasp.

"Now throw up your hands! Up higher! I see you have a revolver, but if you drop your hands by so much as an inch I shall fire on you! Forward! March into the woods!"

"By George, but you don't tell me you are a rebel!" exclaimed the astonished and bewildered cavalryman.

"I don't know yet whether I am or not," replied Kenton. "I'm a Virginian and in the Confederate army, and whether we are rebels or patriots is a question I haven't settled. Keep to the left."

"And you may be the very rebel scout we were hoping to capture!"

"You are pretty near right about that. Keep right on—I'm coming! Now halt and keep your hands still up!"

"What are you going to do with me?" asked the man as he was disarmed and permitted to face about.

"How far is it to the nearest Confederate outpost?"

"About two miles down this road."

"How many videttes between us and the post?"

"Three or four. You are not going to kill me out here in cold blood?"

"You may rest easy on that score," replied Kenton. "A year hence war will mean devastation, destruction, murder and assassination, but men's hearts are not brutalized yet. I must reach the Confederate outpost, but I can't do it by the road."

"I don't think you could fool all the others as you did me," said the cavalryman, with a sickly smile.

"The question is what to do with you? If I set you at liberty, you'll raise an alarm."

"Guess I would—in fact, I know I would."

"And I have nothing to tie you up with until I can get safely away."

"That's so. You remind me of the chap who caught the bear and didn't let go."

"I must take you along with me to the Confederate outpost. We shall cut across the fields and woods to reach it. You go ahead, and I will follow. It is needless."

"I'm no fool!" blantly interrupted the Federal. "When I'm down and the other feller has got his thumbs in my eye and my nose in his jaws, I know enough to cave. You won't have to shoot me, and I want to ask a favor of you."

"Well?"

"Don't walk me in a prisoner."

"I'll see about that. Let's go on."

They struck through the woods, crossed an old field, skirted a meadow and entered another piece of woods. As they were traversing this they came upon a negro cutting firewood, and he informed them that the Confederate outpost was only 20 rods below them on the highway.

"At this stage of the game one prisoner more or less is of no earthly consequence," said Kenton as he looked at the cavalryman. "I'm going to let you return."

"And I've concluded to be taken prisoner and sent to Richmond," replied the man.

"For what reason?"

"Plain as a pumpkin on a gatepost. If I go back without my arms, what can I say? I'd just have to admit that a Johnny reb came along and played me for a sucker and got the best of me. That would mean ridicule and disgrace forever. If I don't go back until exchanged as a prisoner, I'll be all right. I'll sort 'o' give out that I was tackled by about six of you, you know."

"I am sorry that I was obliged to deceive you to save myself," said Kenton after a moment of thought, "and there is no need to disgrace you. Here are your weapons, and you are free to return to your post. The war has not fairly begun yet. There will be hate and bitterness and rancor after awhile, and there will be few opportunities to extend courtesies."

"Say, Johnny, that's a square deal!" joyfully exclaimed the Federal as he received his weapons, "and I want to shake hands with you! Put it there! Can't tell but what we may meet again before this row is over, and if we do I hope it'll come my way to do the fair thing. So long to you!"

Kenton watched him out of sight and then walked down to the highway to find himself at the post of a vidette. He was directed back to the reserve, his pass examined, and he was then within the Confederate lines and ready to push on to Manassas and Jackson's headquarters. When his information had been laid before the stern faced man, whose title of "professor" had been changed to that of "general" within a few brief months, he quietly said:

"You have done excellently. My command is ordered into the valley. I shall have further need of your services in this line, but you may return to your company at present."

CHAPTER X.

No part of the south witnessed so much of the wreck and misery of war as the Shenandoah valley. Its highways, fields and forests, its houses, barns and sheds, its every breeze by day and night for three long years, echoed the fierce shouts of contestants and the groans of wounded men. Nature made it a garden. War converted it into a vast graveyard.

The Federals had begun their march up the valley from Harper's Ferry. Jackson was ordered over to bar the way. Historians may write with prejudice and politicians speak in bitterness. Let us be fair and conscientious, even if we cannot be neutral. Jackson's first battle was on the broad fields of Kernstown. All historians who have written for the future have pronounced him a wonderful man in the science of war. Before his command was fairly in the valley Royal Kenton and others were far ahead, scouting for information. Their reports decided Jackson on moving swiftly up and attacking the Federals as they reached Kernstown. He was beaten back and fairly routed, but that was to be the first and only time.

As Jackson's own brigade swept forward into the fight Kenton was in the ranks of the Shenandoah guards. On his right was Steve Brayton, on his left Ike Baxter. He had known but little of his company since detailed for scout duty. He divined that Captain Wyle's bitterness had intensified, and that the prejudice against him among his com-

rades had rather increased with his absence. He had been detailed from his company, and his return to it as Jackson ordered an advance and everybody knew that a battle would be raging within a couple of hours proved his metal in the eyes of all. And yet not over a dozen men in the company had a nod or a word for him. Ike Baxter, under the tutelage of his master, was carrying out a plan to drive him out in disgrace.

"He un's yere fur no good, and yo' kin lay to that!" Ike had whispered from man to man. "Jist yo' fellers keep yo' eyes open! I'm gwine to do it, and if he un tries to play the traitor I'll put a bullet straight into his carcass! Mebbe he un kin fule General Jackson, but he un can't play no Yankee tricks on me!"

As they marched forward on the highway Steve Brayton found opportunity to say:

"Look yere, Kenton. Ike's goin to play yo' some onery trick if the chance comes, and yo'd better be ready fur him. He un hates yo' like pizen, and he un's tryin to make all the rest do the same."

"I am aware of that," replied Kenton, "but can you tell me the reason for it?"

"Reckon thar ar' several. In the first place, yo' didn't happen to be bo'n down yere, while Ike Baxter and the rest of us critters did. In the second, yo' took the shine out o' the officers at Bull Run. In the third, as nigh as I kin make out, thar's a gal in the case. Looks to me like Ike had been hired to talk agin yo'. At any rate, he's got the boys all stirred up, and yo'd better be keeful not to git too fur ahead of the crowd in case we hev a fount down yere!"

"How does it happen that you are not down on me with the rest?" asked Kenton.

"Reckon thar ar' several reasons in that too. Fustly, yo' could hev got away to the Yankee army if yo' had wanted to. Yo' didn't, and that's a purty good sign yo' un ar' all right. Nextly, yo've got pluck, and I like a plucky man. Mo' nextly, the mo' men we hev the less chance of my bein hit myself. Lastly, I've seen Captain Wyle and Ike Baxter with their heads together about yo', and I've heard that both yo' and the captain was sweet on the same gal, and I've sorter put two and three together and made seven. I'm goin to be right alongside o' yo' in this fount, 'cause I like yo' way o' fightin, but yo' jist mind what I tell yo'! The bullet which hits yo' today is liable to come from our side!"

Jackson's command, numbering not quite 6,000 men, made a rapid march of 40 miles down the valley to strike a blow at General Shields' command of 8,000. They were waiting for the Confederates. Jackson attacked at once.

Even while the rear of his marching column was still two miles away he attacked. It was a fierce and bitter fight. As daylight began to give way to twilight on that dismal March afternoon the guards were ordered to charge a battery which was making a portion of the Confederate line untenable. They dashed forward to be met by a volley which killed or wounded a dozen men, and a swift move on the part of a Federal regiment resulted in the capture of nearly one-half of the others. An hour later Jackson was retreating. He had been defeated.

Ike Baxter was among the wounded. With others he was taken to the field hospital to be cared for, while the unwounded were marched to the rear and placed under guard. Ike had been hit in the shoulder. While his hurt was being dressed he said to the surgeon:

TO BE CONTINUED.



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